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COMMON-PLACE PEOPLE.

THE very good and the very bad among mankind, albeit they form the ordinary humanity of most novels, are rare in actual life. If we descend from the heights of rose-coloured romance to the sober gray valley of this work-a-day world, we shall find that there is generally some saving-clause of good in the wicked, some fault or failing in the virtuous, to redeem the one from absolute atrocity, and the other from complete perfection. There is happily a medium between all extremes, and human beings are not half of them guileless lambs, and the other half exultant wolves ready to pounce upon them, as romancists would have us believe. Moreover, even the modified heroes and villains of real life form but a very small portion of the world's *dramatis personæ*. The vast body of mankind consist of those who are neither detestably bad nor admirably good; overwhelmingly clever, or pitifully stupid—of the *commonplace*, in a word. It is they who leaven society, as it were, and render it of a due consistency; it is they who act as the chorus to the drama, the background to the picture, and who, though not heroic themselves, are necessary adjuncts to the heroism of others.

It is wisely ordered thus, and the more so that all these supernumeraries in the great drama of life have little dramatic episodes of their own, whereof they individually are the heroes and heroines. No one is insignificant to himself; and the most common-place being in the world would assuredly be the last person to suspect the small degree of his own value in the social scale. On the contrary, your ordinary sort of man generally believes himself to be a Napoleon, a Shakspeare, or a Newton, according as his tastes and pursuits are military, literary, or scientific. Often, too, the world is partially deluded into the same belief; for it is a credulous world in some respects, and when it sees a man holding implicit faith in himself, it is very apt to appraise him by his own standard. It is astonishing to think of the number of people who are held to be wonderfully clever, not to say geniuses, simply on the strength of their personal conviction that they are so. They have never done anything to prove it—never will, probably; but they have the benefit of the *prestige* now, and will carry it with them even to the grave. Did any one ever know a doctor who was *not* termed 'a remarkably skilful man?'—or a lawyer, who was not accounted a shrewd, talented fellow?—or a clergyman, who was not pronounced to be either most eloquent or most excellent by a sufficient number of individuals to constitute a Public? In fact, if we might believe in all the

opinions we hear, talent is the rule, and want of it the exception, in this present age. Men and women of intellect are the commonplace; the only moderately intelligent and the stupid are the few—the *rare aves*.

But we—you and I, reader—don't believe all we hear, and we know better of what calibre of humanity the various classes of the commonplace are actually composed. We know, too, how often 'the world'—principally made up of those very classes, we remember—is mistaken in its judgments, as to who are, and who are not, common-place people. We have marked numerous instances when it has done honour to the daw in peacock's feathers, and when—to carry out the ornithological comparison—it has neglected or despised the nightingale, because it was so brown and homely a bird to look at. Was it not only the other evening, at Lady Ormolu's dinner-party, that Mr Jones, after conversing through one course and a half with his left-hand neighbour, pronounced him, in an aside to the lady on his right, one of the dullest, most inane, and most common-place individuals? And was not the said Jones put to the blush when he was informed that his dull and inane acquaintance was the world-renowned artist, whose pictures are known, admired, and prized by all Europe? Be more cautious another time, Mr Jones, in forming your opinion of strangers, and, for your reputation's sake, be less precipitate in expressing it when formed. Do not again judge a man's intellect after half an hour's conversation with him, particularly at a dinner-party. Perhaps it requires not a large intellect, but a little one, to constitute the stock in trade of the sayer of smart things and agreeable nothings, who is so valuable an adjunct to assemblies, and who is pronounced 'a most clever, pleasant person' by Mr Jones and others.

'Appearances are deceitful,' say the school-copies. It is to be feared that the round-text moralities of the writing-master make but a small impression on the minds of youth, or that it soon wears off; for when boys grow to man's estate, they are apt to run exactly counter to the excellent advice contained in those pithy little sentences. How many people of our acquaintance do *not* judge from appearances? Let a man quote from one or two abstruse books, interlard his conversation with Latin and Greek, comb his hair but seldom, and shave still less frequently, and he will find a sufficient number of persons quite ready to admire him as the wisest, most erudite of men. In the same way, a man who dresses well, speaks with respectful regard for Lindley Murray, and does not outrage the *bien-séances*, is considered and denominated a *gentleman*. Well, perhaps after all, it is a wise world to be so credulous! If the outside is fair, let us be

content with *that*, without seeking to look deeper. Let us believe in the talent of one person, the amiability of another, just as we do in the solidity of our rose-wood tables. Let us banish the consciousness that they are only veneered, and that if we cut into the wood, we shall find that the polish does not extend beyond the surface. At anyrate, I, who am an unappreciated, and therefore a cynical being, have resolved to do so for the future.

But *revenons à nos moutons*—that is to say, to our common-place people. As I have indicated, I hope, by the foregoing anecdote of Jones, the balance is kept tolerably even. If one set of people are over-rated, the really talented, the unquestionably superior, are often treated very shabbily by that great autocrat, public opinion. I myself am thought little of by ordinary minds. As I have said, the world is principally made up of common-place people, and it naturally seeks its heroes from among its peers. *Parmi les aveugles les borgnes sont rois*. People with two eyes have no chance.

However, I will add—for I like to be impartial—that my wife, who is of a more genial temperament than I am, takes altogether another view of the subject. She thinks—I put it into elegant language for her, as she is not literary—that commonplacism *per se* does not exist. Everybody is interesting to some one or two others in the world; for instance, every man who has a mother has some one to admire and love him—to think him a hero or a sage—most handsome, most clever, or most excellent in some way. He is never commonplace to *her*. Moreover, my wife declares her belief, confirmed by observation, that if we could thoroughly understand the idiosyncrasy, or be made intimately acquainted with the *lives* of even those people we ourselves are apt to decry as commonplace, we should be sure to find special individualities, both of thought, and feeling, and action, to redeem them from the character. Therefore, she triumphantly concludes, since the world's common-place people are *my* heroes, and my common-place people are very often God's heroes and heroines—where are we to find the absolutely commonplace?

I am to remember, she says, my old-bachelor cousin Harte, whom I always used to wonder at, as the most perfect specimen of human clock-work, wound up to go to the bank daily, write there for six hours, and return to his lodgings—and who couldn't do anything else, I verily believed, except potter about the back garden of his lodgings, read the newspaper, and cut out a man with a cocked-hat, in card-board, to amuse the children, when he came to us to tea. Well, how was I to know that all that time he might have been put into a book as an example of constancy, courage, and all that sort of thing? I hardly knew that such a person as Anna Lyle existed, much less that they had loved each other ever since they were boy and girl together. But they were both poor, and Anna had a helpless father dependent on her for support; so they both worked on, loved one another, and had patience. They were middle-aged before they married. Yes, I remember I was astonished when Harte quietly introduced his wife to us, and for the first time I noticed something in his face. In fact, I've not thought him at all commonplace since.

I confess, also, that I never thought much about little Charlotte Selby—one of Selby the merchant's three daughters. Her elder sister was the more accomplished, and the younger was far handsomer. She appeared to me a very ordinary kind of medium, in age, looks, and abilities. I never should have suspected her of the quiet energy, the sense and courage she displayed when her father failed, and the family were reduced to much poverty and privation. She was the mainstay and support of all the rest through the whole trying time that the broken-down

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Further, I am reminded—But my wife's examples would be endless. I shall name no more. I submit to her so far as to own, that there may be plenty more Hartes and Charlottes among my common-place acquaintance, even among those that I grumble at when they are invited to tea, and call 'limpets' and 'pumpkin.' Yes, yes, anything and everything she says is true, no doubt.

I deny nothing—and I shall not go over my own case again. Judge between us, O reader, and decide for thyself upon this knotty question.

GLIMPSES OF AFFAIRS IN AMERICA.

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

In the dashing times which produced the Declaration of Independence, and opened up the most glowing anticipations of a political millennium, in which we were to 'hold these truths as self-evident, that all men are created equal—that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights—that among these are life, LIBERTY, and the pursuit of happiness'—we say, in the midst of these announcements of a brighter day for hitherto down-trodden human nature, and of what was actually done towards founding a great republic, who could have foreseen that in eighty years the result would be a state of things in which a sixth part of the population would be slaves—human beings of every variety of complexion and diversity of intelligence, placed, from no fault of their own, on a level with the brute creation; and further, that this sorrowful and abject condition would come to be extended, perpetuated, vindicated as an essential element in civil society! The world, as it appears to us, has hardly awakened to a consciousness of this historical anomaly; and this is not surprising, for the Americans themselves are as yet only beginning to see the awkwardness of the dilemma into which they have allowed themselves to be drifted.

It was from no qualm of conscience on the part of the committee appointed to draw up the Declaration—Jefferson, Adams, Livingston, Sherman, and Franklin—that the passages relative to slavery were struck out from the celebrated document. 'He [the king of Great Britain] has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people, who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur a miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce.* &c. It was quite as well that these ungentle accusations should have been withdrawn in consideration, as is said, for the feelings of southern members of the infant confederacy; that so there might remain no historical doubt of the fact, that Union was secured only by conciliating the more intractable order of

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slaveholders. Whatever, therefore, may be our surprise at the present anomalous complication of American liberty and slavery, the marvel would seem to be lessened by the explanation, that from the very commencement, on that memorable 4th of July 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was read from the steps of the city-hall in Philadelphia, there never has been a condition of universal freedom. The Declaration, doubtless, propounded the doctrine of human equality; but this document never seems to have had the validity of law. At all events, as regards the principle of slavery, the lofty preamble of the Declaration about 'inalienable rights' has proved to be only a respectable piece of *Bunkum*—words which serve their purpose, and signify nothing.

At the opening of the revolutionary war, there were slaves in all the revolted colonies; even in Massachusetts, the land of the 'Pilgrim Fathers,' there were slaves, and sales of slaves too. England, of course, must be charged with the crime of having, in the first instance, introduced these unfortunate Africans as an article of merchandise into the plantations against the repeatedly expressed wishes of the settlers, and of having fostered slavery till it took root as a social usage. Lawyers might now speculate on the question—whether, at the period of the revolutionary troubles, slaves could be legally held in the colonies? A short time previously, it had been decided by courts of justice, that a slave landing in England became free; and as the common law was extended over all parts of the realm, it is demonstrable that the maintenance of slavery in distant dependencies was, to say the least of it, open to challenge. The question was not, however, tried; and, as is well known, a vigorous English slave-trade was carried on for many years afterwards with the West Indies and other possessions—much to the profit of Liverpool and Bristol, and apparently to the satisfaction or indifference of all, except the few individuals who deigned to feel an interest in the unhappy objects of ruthless deportation—which individuals, as is usual in such cases, were set down as visionaries, crack-brained enthusiasts, who had no proper regard for national greatness. When the House of Commons was at length induced, in 1792, to pass a bill for the suppression of the slave-trade, it was rejected by the House of Lords, on the ground of its damaging effects upon great commercial and colonial interests. As the famous abolition act did not pass till 1807, and the trade did not absolutely cease till the 1st of January 1808—as, in fact, slaves were held in the colonies until our own times—and, what is still more to the point, as our continued national prosperity depends in no small degree on the purchase and manufacture of slave-grown cotton—the English have not much reason to be boastful on the subject.

For several years after the termination of the revolutionary war—1784 to 1789—the Americans had no proper federal constitution, and public matters were regulated during this interregnum by what was called the Continental Congress, sitting in Philadelphia or New York. To have anything like a correct notion of the American slave question, we need to look back to the operations of this august body. One of the subjects that fell under its discussion, was the management of certain western territories which several states relinquished for the benefit of the general commonwealth, in consideration that congress should liquidate debts and obligations incurred by these states during the war. The sessions were made on these terms; and congress henceforth exercised a direct sovereignty over large tracts of country, from which new states could be excavated. Plans for the government of the Western Territory occupied considerable attention; Mr Jefferson apparently taking a lead in the business, and producing schemes by which slavery was never to be intruded into this vast region. A

proposal of this nature was lost on coming to a vote; but at length, in 1787, in the last continental congress, was passed an 'Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, North-west of the Ohio,' which embraced this provision: 'There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the parties shall be duly convicted.' The enactment of this law may be said to settle the point, that congress is entitled, among other regulations, to enjoin that slavery shall or shall not be a constituent element in the Territories under its special jurisdiction.

The circumstance of Jefferson not being able to carry his larger measure, which comprehended territories south of those just mentioned, shews that the leading men of the time were cramped in their benevolent efforts to extend the sphere of freedom. They were thoroughly aware that slavery in any form, or wherever situated, was a bad thing; and on suitable occasions, they spoke plainly out on the subject. Not disguising the fact from themselves or from others, they nevertheless thought proper to temporise. Believing that any attempt at emancipation through federal agency would probably alienate slaveholders, and so jeopardise the consolidation of the States, they were inclined to leave the subject to the action of public opinion, of which there were hopeful symptoms. As early as 1775, the representatives of a district in Georgia passed a resolution, declaring their disapprobation and abhorrence of the unnatural practice of slavery in America—a practice, they say, 'founded on injustice and cruelty, and highly dangerous to our liberties, as well as lives; debasing part of our fellow-creatures below men, and corrupting the virtue and morals of the rest; and as laying the basis of that liberty we contend for on a wrong foundation.' Other anti-slavery sentiments shine out during the ensuing ten years. Massachusetts and other New-England States, and also Pennsylvania, denounce slavery, provide for securing freedom to all born after a certain day, and prohibit the import of any more slaves. Virginia likewise prohibits importation, and removes legal restrictions on emancipation. From North Carolina, New York, and New Jersey, are issued edicts against the further import of slaves. In short, it appears as if slavery was everywhere about to be given up, and done with. Some expectations of this kind, along with an anxiety to conciliate doubtful friends, afford the only excuse for the perpetuation of slavery under the constitution. With a distinct consciousness of its injustice, its dangers, slavery was recognised under ambiguous terms—singular anomaly!—in the great charter of republican freedom. It was competent to repudiate it; it was advisable to maintain a discreet silence respecting it. Neither was done. Here lies the first great blunder of American statesmanship, never to be rectified. The constitution was framed in 1787, and was in general operation in 1789.

This constitution, which still gives cohesion to the States under a federal government, is an instrument divided into articles, each subdivided into clauses. The passages referring to slavery are as follows: In the second clause of the first article there is a provision for representation and taxation—'Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to servitude for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.' By 'all other persons' is signified slaves. Accordingly, in whatever state slavery exists, there is till this day a statutory method of making up an artificial constituency: in other words, the number is swelled by counting slaves; but

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The circumstance of Jefferson not being able to carry his larger measure, which comprehended territories south of those just mentioned, shews that the leading men of the time were cramped in their benevolent efforts to extend the sphere of freedom. They were thoroughly aware that slavery in any form, or wherever situated, was a bad thing; and on suitable occasions, they spoke plainly out on the subject. Not disguising the fact from themselves or from others, they nevertheless thought proper to temporise. Believing that any attempt at emancipation through federal agency would probably alienate slaveholders, and so jeopardise the consolidation of the States, they were inclined to leave the subject to the action of public opinion, of which there were hopeful symptoms. As early as 1775, the representatives of a district in Georgia passed a resolution, declaring their disapprobation and abhorrence of the unnatural practice of slavery in America—'a practice,' they say, 'founded on injustice and cruelty, and highly dangerous to our liberties, as well as lives; debasing part of our fellow-creatures below men, and corrupting the virtue and morals of the rest; and as laying the basis of that liberty we contend for on a wrong foundation.' Other anti-slavery sentiments shine out during the ensuing ten years. Massachusetts and other New-England States, and also Pennsylvania, denounce slavery, provide for securing freedom to all born after a certain day, and prohibit the import of any more slaves. Virginia likewise prohibits importation, and removes legal restrictions on emancipation. From North Carolina, New York, and New Jersey, are issued edicts against the further import of slaves. In short, it appears as if slavery was everywhere about to be given up, and done with. Some expectations of this kind, along with an anxiety to conciliate doubtful friends, afford the only excuse for the perpetuation of slavery under the constitution. With a distinct consciousness of its injustice, its dangers, slavery was recognised under ambiguous terms—singular anomaly!—in the great charter of republican freedom. It was competent to repudiate it; it was advisable to maintain a discreet silence respecting it. Neither was done. Here lies the first great blunder of American statesmanship, never to be rectified. The constitution was framed in 1787, and was in general operation in 1789.

This constitution, which still gives cohesion to the States under a federal government, is an instrument divided into articles, each subdivided into clauses. The passages referring to slavery are as follows: In the second clause of the first article there is a provision for representation and taxation—'Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to servitude for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.' By 'all other persons' is signified slaves. Accordingly, in whatever state slavery exists, there is till this day a statutory method of making up an artificial constituency: in other words, the number is swelled by counting slaves; but

as the slaves have no vote, it happens that a limited constituency of free white persons possess a political power equal to that of a constituency altogether free. That so acute a people as the Americans should have accepted this as a fair thing in representation, and still submit to it, almost passes belief. To proceed, however. The next reference to slavery in the constitution is contained in another clause of the first article—'The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the congress prior to the year 1808; but a tax or duty may be imposed, not exceeding ten dollars on each person.' By one of the clauses of the fourth article, it is ordained that 'No person held to service or labour in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such labour may be due.' The use of such ambiguous terms as 'persons held to labour,' leads one to infer that the fathers of the constitution were ashamed of the thing indicated. In the face of mankind, and fresh from a successful struggle for liberty, they do not appear to have had the courage to employ a candid phraseology. Be this as it may, the constitution had taken its ground in maintaining the rights of slaveholders. They could hold persons to service, pursue and secure them if they fled; and at least until 1808, they could migrate with them to new possessions, and receive fresh supplies by importation.

Possibly, the national conscience felt no alarm in adopting these legal institutes. All were jubilant over late successes. A mighty power three thousand miles off had been humbled; 'glory,' as Emerson says, had been 'bought cheap.' The new republic could afford to lecture England—which, we are thankful, has always been able to stand a good deal of sound scolding—on the doctrine of inherent human rights. In the address of the first congress under the constitution, to the people of Great Britain, what grandeur in the passages about liberty, oppression, slavery, and chains. 'When a nation, led to greatness by the hand of liberty, and possessed of all the glory that heroism, munificence, and humanity can bestow, descends to the ungrateful task of forging chains for her friends and children, and instead of giving support to freedom, turns advocate for slavery and oppression, there is reason to believe that she has ceased to be virtuous, or has been extremely negligent in the appointment of her rulers.' With such remonstrances against wrong-doing, which seem as if addressed to the living generation of Americans, who could suppose that this same congress required to be reminded that a section of the population was still deprived of its rights? As president of the Abolition Society of Philadelphia, Franklin signed a memorial to the first congress, praying that the blessings of liberty may be rightfully administered, 'without distinction of colour,' and that congress would be pleased to countenance the restoration to liberty of those unhappy men, who alone in a land of freedom are degraded into perpetual bondage.' We all admire the philanthropy breathed in these words; but are unpleasantly reminded that Franklin, with his compatriots, would perhaps have acted more wisely in not constitutionally sanctioning a thing which required afterwards to be spoken of in terms of reprobation.

Let us, however, not bear too hard on the first congress, which in 1789 set a worthy example for future legislation. If the constitution had given congress no power to meddle with slavery in any of the states, it had at least enabled it to regulate the affairs of the territories, from which, both by law and precedent, slavery could be peremptorily excluded. This congress accordingly 'recognised and affirmed the doctrine, embodied by Jefferson in the ordinance of 1787, which for ever excluded slavery from the territory

that now embraces Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; and in 1800, the same doctrine was approved by John Adams in the Territorial Act for Indiana.*

Kept as yet within bounds, and no means being immediately adopted to push slavery beyond certain old limits, the number of 'persons held to labour' in the United States, in 1790, was only 697,897; and as their average market-value was then comparatively small, there could have been no insurmountable difficulty in providing means for their liberation on equitable terms. But no effort of this kind required to be made. The progress of local emancipation which was clearing slavery from the northern, would soon remove it from the middle states; and all that the legislators of the day were called on to do, was to adopt such measures as would prevent slavery from extending and intrenching itself permanently in the south. Neglectful on this point, all was lost.

Engaged in the task of establishing a great nation—building cities, reclaiming wildernesses, opening up channels of internal communication, extending commerce, planting churches, schools, printing-presses, and other engines of civilisation; successful in almost all arts, and flourishing beyond the hopes of the wildest imagination—the Americans never seem to have attained a clear consciousness that there was any lurking possibility of social dislocation in consequence of slavery being tolerated within their political system. Not that there has not always been a party who augured danger from this quarter; but in the main, things have been left to take their course; or more correctly, the nation has, with singular indifference, seen a series of events successively and more and more hopelessly interweave slavery with the constitution.

It was, we believe, a crotchet of Washington that the federal capital of the United States should be a city removed from popular influences—as if there was any imaginable Olympus from which the pleasant constitutional practice of *Lobbying* could by any stratagem be excluded. New York would not do. Philadelphia—more the pity—would not do. There must be a metropolis standing alone in virtuous solitude, somewhere about the centre of the Union. Accordingly, a site was pitched upon, on the banks of the Potomac, the contiguous states of Virginia and Maryland severally resigning a patch of a few miles square for the purpose, henceforth called the District of Columbia. When Washington here planned and built the city which bears his name, he could not have had any great horror of slavery, although he would much rather there had been no such thing in the world. Virginia and Maryland were then, as now, slave states. Slavery accordingly remained in the District of Columbia, as if indigenous in the soil; and from this time the supreme authorities of the United States became the civic magistracy of a kind of miniature independent state, in which slavery was a recognised institution. It could be shewn that this plantation of a political metropolis in the bosom of slavery did much disservice to the cause of freedom—the sight of slaves, slave-depôts, slave-sales, and the looseness of morals usual in communities affected by slavery, producing no good effect on representatives from the free states. It might be argued that, as Columbia was surrounded by slave states, freedom within this small domain was impracticable. That, however, is not the question. The thing to be deprecated was, making federal authority responsible for an institution which American writers never cease to represent as belonging exclusively to the states in their individual capacity. If any one up till this time imagined that slavery was independent of national administration, his faith, we think, must have received a considerable

* *America Free, or America Slave—Address to the Citizens of Westchester.* By John Jay, Esq.

shock. There were remonstrances, but they sunk and disappeared under a general acquiescence.

We are now referring to the close of the last and beginning of the present century, and shortly afterwards came an event far more serious than the organisation of the capital of the Union. This was a vast accession of new territory on the south and west. Left to themselves, with a wide continent invitingly open for acquisition, the Anglo-Americans only seemed to fulfil an obvious destiny in carrying their flag beyond the limits of the colonies which had been reft from the British crown. A favourable opportunity for making a large acquisition occurred in 1803, when the French under Bonaparte offered to sell the province of Louisiana, which embraced pretty nearly the whole Valley of the Mississippi. A little better management on the part of England would perhaps have saved the French the trouble of bargaining away this valuable foreign possession, which they could no longer keep; but as Louisiana was not so secured, it fell naturally, and we must say justifiably, into the hands of the Americans. The purchase, which was made for the sum of fifteen millions of dollars, excited the first of that series of struggles in congress between north and south, which has lasted till our own times. The country acquired, was already settled in its lower part with French slaveholders engaged in the culture of sugar and cotton, and covered an area of about 900,000 square miles—a space larger than all the old thirteen states put together, and including the territories of Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, which have latterly engaged so much angry disputation, and caused no little bloodshed.

On the one hand, it was scarcely in human nature to resist the easy acquisition of so splendid a domain; on the other, there were not unreasonable fears among northern politicians that the addition would in some way imperil the security of the Union. Prognostications of disaster, remonstrances, legal doubts, availed not against the controlling desire for national greatness. It mattered not that Washington, in his farewell address to the people of the United States, had uttered the solemn warning—'Let there be no change from usurpation.' It mattered not that Jefferson, at the time president, shewed argumentatively that 'the constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for our incorporating foreign nations into our Union,' and intimated that the acquisition of Louisiana 'would make the constitution blank paper by construction.' Against his better judgment, Jefferson acquiesced in the opinions of those who differed from him, and passed the bill which incorporated Louisiana with the Union. No provision was made for excluding slavery from the ceded territory: the inhabitants, on the contrary, were insured the enjoyment of all their existing property, rights, and privileges; and as the holding of slaves was one of these immunities, it continued, as a matter of course, to be incorporated with the public policy.

The passage of the Louisiana Bill has been justly referred to as the turning-point in the history of the states. It at once and for ever reduced the northern and free communities to an inferior political position, and gave an immense preponderance to the slaveholding interests of the south. In accounting for so extraordinary a change in affairs, the future historian will probably point to other reasons besides the vulgar outcry for national enlargement. He will doubtless find occasion to lament the decline of public spirit. Whether it be that Providence at certain periods sends great men into the world to accomplish particular purposes; or that such at all times latently exist, and are developed into notice by national convulsions; or, to hazard another alternative, that republics are not favourable to the growth of prominent individuals, the fact is undeniable that the great men who effected the

American and French revolutions, and who, be it remarked, were bred up under monarchical rule, left behind them no equals in magnitude of intellect or indomitable force of character. It is true that several persons who figured in the commotions of '76 were still on the stage when the Louisiana Bill came under discussion; but there was now a general collapse in heroism; intrigue took the place of patriotic ardour; the men of the north, for the sake of material interests, succumbed to a course of treatment, which their more sturdy ancestors would not have endured from an English ministry. Unfortunately, also, a deterioration of manners was visible among slaveholders. The gentlemanly spirit of the old planters was passing away. Virginia was beginning to be 'overrun by time-servers, office-hunters, and political blacklegs.' Power was subsidising into the possession of this disreputable class of personages. Nor, all things considered, could much else be expected. Certain radical mistakes, as had been seen, were committed in the general terms of union. The constitutional recognition of slavery had fixed and given breadth to the institution. The very slaveholders had secured a franchise to which nothing corresponded in the north. For the free states, as has been shewn, representation is based purely on a free population, whereas in the slave states it is founded to a large extent on property in slaves; consequently, a mere handful of slaveholders—only 350,000, it is said, altogether, along with their indigent and easily influenced white neighbours—are able to exert a direct power in the House of Representatives, approaching that of the wealthy and populous free states, numbering in 1850 a population of 13,330,650 whites. Of course, such a flagrant piece of injustice could not have been tolerated for any length of time, had the north been true to itself. But this, as we may afterwards have occasion to particularise, it has never been—a large proportion of northern men having on all occasions cast in their lot with the political party represented by the more imperious aristocracy of the south. With such facts before us, can we feel surprise at the passage of the Louisiana Bill, and all subsequent bills of the same nature? Freedom had been delivered up, bound hand and foot, to the interests of slavery, and all that followed was a natural consequence of this fundamental error. We are justified in these opinions by the remarks of the venerable Josiah Quincy, a survivor of the youthful era of the republic. In his late admirable address on this subject, he says: 'The passage of the Louisiana Admission Bill was effected by arts which slaveholders well know how to select and apply. Sops were given to the congressional watch-dogs of the free states. To some, promises were made, by way of opiates; and those whom they could neither pay nor drug were publicly treated with insolence and scorn. Threats, duels, and violence were at that day, as now, modes approved by them to deter men from awakening the free states to a sense of danger. From the moment the act was passed, they saw that the free states were shorn of their strength; that they had obtained space to multiply slaves at their will; and Mr Jefferson had confidently told them that, from that moment, the "constitution of the United States was blank paper;" but more correctly, there was no longer any constitution. The slaveholders, from that day, saw they had the free states in their power; that they were masters, and the free states slaves; and have acted accordingly. From the passage of the Louisiana Bill until this day, their policy has been directed to a single object, with almost uninterrupted success. That object was to exclude the free states from any share of power, except in subserviency to their views; and they have undeniably, during all the subsequent period of our history (the administration of John Quincy Adams only excepted) placed in the chair of state either slaveholders or men from the free states who,

for the sake of power, consented to be their tools—"Northern men with Southern principles;" in other words, men who, for the sake of power or pay, were willing to do any work they would set them upon.*

With the widening scope for slave-labour opened up by the passage of the Louisiana Bill, also the contemporary extension of slavery over portions of the southern states, it will not appear strange that in 1810 (notwithstanding the removal of the institution from several states, and the stoppage of the foreign slave-trade in 1808), the number of slaves in the Union had increased to 1,191,364—a significant commentary on the hallucinations of the patriot founders of the republic.

W. C.

THE MUTINY OF THE GRANT HIGHLANDERS.

BY ONE OF THE MUTINEERS.

BEFORE entering on the subject in hand, the reader will be pleased to bear with me while I give a brief relation of the circumstances which brought me in connection with the Grant Highlanders, and of the doings of the regiment previous to the mutiny.

I am one of those unfortunates who never saw their father. Mine died a week before my birth, and my mother married a discharged soldier six months afterwards. Poor woman!—happy would it have been for her, and for me too, had she remained faithful to the memory of her first husband, for the cruelty and debauchery of her second sent her to an early grave, and drove her boy forth a wanderer from the home that should have sheltered him. Thus, while yet a parent's guiding hand should have been with me, I was cast upon the mercies of a strange world, and forced to take an active part in the great battle of life.

After struggling with difficulties such as only the friendless have to encounter, I at length reached that period which was to mark my future destiny. This was in 1794, when I would be about fifteen years of age, tall, strong, and prematurely manly. Sir James Grant was then engaged in raising a new regiment—the 97th, or Grant Highlanders; and many lads from the district in which I lived—a lonesome valley in Inverness-shire—enlisted under his banner. At first I felt no desire to follow their example, for the remembrance of a certain red coat, which at one time lay in a drawer in my mother's kitchen, and which had engendered a dislike to all soldiers, now arose vividly before me. One beautiful spring morning, however, as I was tending cattle on an upland pasture, there came floating on the freshening breeze, which hurried oceanward, sounds of distant music. I was wondering and debating with myself whence they proceeded, when suddenly I beheld a numerous band of red coats emerge from the gorge of a gloomy valley at an angle of the hill whereon I was standing. It was a glorious sight to my young eyes that first beholding of a regiment of soldiers, as rank by rank they issued from the darkness into the sunshine, which fell, as it were, in showers of glory on their scarlet array!

On, on they came, and the merry roll of the drum set my heart dancing. My whole nature seemed to undergo a revolution. Old antipathies were forgotten, and giddy with delight, I hastened down the hill to meet the approaching Highlanders, for it was Sir James Grant's new regiment on the march to Fort George.

In the mood of mind which possessed me, it required no 'oily tongue persuasive' to induce me to become a king's man, nor had I before my eyes the fear of breaking the heart of a poor old mother, or that of a sweetheart, therefore I readily accepted the shilling

which Lieutenant Macdonald offered me. Sending my dog, Chance, off to watch the cattle until a more trustworthy servant than I should come, I marched away with a swaggering air from the hills of my boyhood, never more to behold them, except through the dim mists of the far away.

Drill, drill, drill!—months of continuous drill, and then we were pronounced fit for duty. In the summer of 1794, we, together with the Gordon and Seaforth Highlanders, sailed from Fort George for Southampton in England. We had scarcely got settled in our new quarters ere we got the route for the island of Guernsey, where we passed a miserable winter—our duty being onerous, rations scanty, and the weather severe. Glad, indeed, were we when the spring of '95 saw us once more safely located on the shores of Old England.

But there is no rest for the wicked. Government having now more need of our aid on the sea than on the land, bethought themselves of rendering us available as sea-soldiers; and in conformity with this idea, we were lent, as it were, for a short season, to the marine service.

In our new character, we joined the Channel-fleet under Lord Bridport. To us it was a mere pleasure-cruise, until the 21st of June, when a frigate brought us intelligence that the enemy's fleet was out; but, much to the chagrin of Jack, a heavy gale was blowing at the time, which forced us to remain inactive, and to tack about, under easy sail. At midnight, however, the wind somewhat abated, and by the first streaks of morning, we descried the enemy right ahead. Cheer after cheer rent the welkin, as his lordship's signal for a general chase and to prepare for action flew forth to the breeze. On board our wooden bulwarks all were as lifeful and mirthful as if they had been hastening to a bridal-feast—and so they were—but Death, unthought of, was the bridegroom.

The chase continued all that day and night, for the gale had lulled to a dead calm; and as screws were then unthought of, our progress was slow. O how we did whistle for a few puffs of our late visitant the gale! At four in the morning of the 23d a fine breeze sprung up to our whistling, and ere two more hours had passed, the French were brought within range of our long Toms. The *Irresistible*, the *Orion*, the *Robert*, and the *Colossus*—on board of which last vessel I was—being the headmost ships-of-the-line, were the first to enter into action.

This was the first fight in which we Highland marines had been engaged. We certainly did feel strangely out of our element, cooped up within wooden walls, unable to dash forward at once to the charge.

It is strange how quickly the mind assimilates itself to the spirit which prevails around. At first, there was a slight tremor of fear mixed with my courage; and the sight of the mangled bodies and limbs of my mates well-nigh sickened me. But the stir and bustle of the battle, the thunder and glare of the cannon, and the shouts of the combatants, mingled with the shrieks of the wounded, soon drove my sentimentalism away, and I cheered, loaded, and fired away, as if it had only been a review, instead of a mighty life-struggle in which I was engaged.

The breeze which carried the *Irresistible* and six others into action having failed before the heavy line-ships could come up, the seven had to begin and maintain the fight with fourteen of the enemy. We were beginning to feel two to one rather a little unpleasant, when the tide of battle was turned by the arrival of the others; and as the admiral passed us in the *Royal George*, we welcomed him with three thundering cheers. The battle now was soon over, and we were left in possession of the *Formidable*, 80; *Le Tigre*, 80; and the *Alexandre*, 74 guns.

About forty of my comrades were among the killed

* Address Illustrative of the Nature and Power of the Slave States, and the Duties of the Free States: delivered at Quincy, Massachusetts, June 5, 1850. Boston: Ticknor and Fields.

and wounded; but to me Providence was kind—I came out of the fight without having received a scratch. Our ship, besides receiving numerous damages of a minor character, had her main top-mast shot away, and the mizzen greatly shattered. The *Prince of Wales*, the *Robert*, and the *Orion*, being also considerably damaged, were ordered, along with us, into port with the prizes, to get repaired.

On landing at Portsmouth, we were quartered in Hulsea Barracks. We mustered at this time about 1200 men altogether. This number being considered by those in power too many for one battalion, the regiment was divided into two, one of which was sent on board the hulks to guard the prisoners, while the other was left on shore to do barrack-duty. The latter division, to which I belonged, soon after received orders to be drafted for the marine service solely. To a man we refused to go—arguing that, having enlisted for the land service, we were determined not to be forced into any other. Hearing of our refusal to comply, General C——, the governor, came among us next day, and threatened compulsion unless we succumbed; but we only laughed at his threats, and were the more resolved to hold out for what we conceived to be our rights. Letters were privately conveyed to those on board the hulks, requesting them to join us without delay. They lost no time in doing so: that same night they secured the prisoners by closing the hatches, and before morning, were all safe with us in Hulsea Barracks. Foreseeing how the affair was likely to end, our officers now left us. The governor, of course, was early informed of our proceedings, and a second visit from him was the result. The sergeants, acting in our behalf, told him we were all willing to shed our best blood in defence of king and country, but that no power on earth could compel us to become marines, when we would otherwise. To be bearded thus by a parcel of Scotch vagabonds, as he politely termed us, was more than the old gentleman could bear with equanimity. He left us in high dudgeon, blustering as he went, that before the week was a day older, we would gladly do that which government required us. We guessed what he meant, and prepared accordingly. The party who had been doing duty on board the hulks still retained their ammunition, which was now divided equally among us all.

Next morning at length dawned, and with it came the governor, the 11th regiment of the line, two brigades of artillery, and two troops of dragoons. The call sounded for parade, which we immediately obeyed; and when drawn up in the square, we were once more asked to comply with the king's commands. Despite the vast array of compulsive power before us, we to a man still adhered to our former resolution. The 11th were now placed in our front, supported on either side by the dragoons and artillery. After some little manoeuvring, we were ordered to ground arms, which we did; to march into barracks, which we also did, but were not foolish enough to leave our muskets behind.

'A thousand curses on you, you rebellious Highland crew!' furiously shouted old C——, when he witnessed our doings.

Mad with rage, he commanded the 11th to load, &c. We, too, obeyed him, as if his orders had been addressed to us. We loaded, but not as the poor infantry loaded; they rammed home blank-cartridge—we, ball! Neither the general nor the poor soldiers guessed this, and we as little knew what they used. C——'s object was only to frighten us; but he reckoned without his host. Orders for the last time were now read, and we felt that the critical moment had arrived. Oh, how our hearts beat with anxiety for the issue! At length, the terrible word 'fire' was given, and ere the echo had passed away, shrieks and groans from wounded and dying men rent the murky atmosphere. Comrade

turned towards comrade, and asked how it fared with him, and then it was the fearful discovery was made that our opponents' Fire had been only a sham! Great was their consternation, poor fellows, when they witnessed the havoc which our ball-cartridge had made in their ranks. Long before the smoke cleared away, they retreated helter-skelter from the scene—the gallant general taking the lead.

Here was a pretty fix to be in! The murderer's doom was sure to be each of ours—at least every one felt so, except one old sergeant.

'Plood, men!' exclaimed he, in Highland English, 'what pe ye fear'd o'? She (meaning the governor) pe her nainsel to plain; she cried "fire," and we fired—that was only obeying orders.'

Despite this line of argument, we all felt more or less uncomfortable; but I daresay it was more on account of the dead and the dying soldiers than from the anticipation of any punishment we might receive. An hour was now spent in anxious deliberation regarding our next procedure, when it was finally resolved that we should remain where we were—doing duty as before, mounting guard, &c.; and as our small stock of ammunition was unexhausted, we determined, should a fresh force be brought against us, to act on the defensive, as we fully expected that, if it did come, it would come to kill, not to frighten!

For three days we remained in this state, without any sign of the 'enemy's' approach. Early in the morning of the fourth day, however, Sergeant Halliday, the acting officer of the guard then on duty, was accosted by a military-looking gentleman, who asked:

'Who is the officer on duty?'

'We have no officer,' was the sergeant's reply.

'Who commands the guard, then?' was the next query.

'I do,' answered Halliday, drawing himself up to his full height, as if he were 'somebody.'

'Beat to arms, and turn all out!' imperiously commanded the unknown.

'By whose orders?'

'By the orders of General Abercromby.'

In a twinkling, the call sounded 'To arms! to arms!' and each barrack-room was as quickly alive with commotion. Being very early, very few of us were out of bed when the alarm broke upon our ears, and, as a matter of course, nothing but hurry and confusion prevailed. Here might be seen a multitude fleeing to the yard with kilts, coats, and other articles of dress in their hands—there, a band with their coats on, but no kilt. Particular regard was paid to one thing, however—the musket. None forgot his 'Brown Bess,' although kilt and hose were wanting; for we imagined the 'enemy' were close at hand. When Sir Ralph saw the hurly-burly and sad confusion in which we were, he laughingly ordered us back to our rooms to dress, which order we cheerfully obeyed, after understanding who he was. Being now fully arrayed and drawn up in the square, we welcomed him with three Highland cheers. He then called the sergeants round him, and told them to inform us that he was commissioned by government to get our unfortunate affair settled, and requested to know what our grievances were, pledging his word of honour that we should receive justice.

Through our sergeants, we acquainted Sir Ralph with the whole history of the matter, telling him, as we told old C——, that we were still willing to serve our king and country in the service for which we enlisted, and that we decidedly objected to be changed into marines. He replied, that he was happy to learn that our loyalty remained unshaken, and hoped many of us would join the expedition of which he was on the eve of taking the command. Under the impression that we were to accompany him immediately, we expressed our willingness by making old Hulsea barrack-yard echo with our cheering. But he now told us that

our regiment was disbanded—that we were no longer soldiers—that each was left to follow the bent of his own mind. He trusted, however, that none of us would leave the service. To those who wished to join the marines, a bounty of L.5 would be allowed; and to those who, disliking that service, entered the 42d or any of the other Highland regiments, L.4 of bounty would be given. No fewer than 500 chose the 42d; many, the other regiments; a few left the service entirely; and, notwithstanding our former antipathy, 300 of us joined the marines.

Thus was this serious mutiny amicably quelled by the adroitness of a sensible man. It is a curious history from first to last, and teaches an important lesson to those who have the command of troops. Government had obviously placed themselves in a false position, from which they could not have been honourably extricated, but by the expedient of Sir Ralph Abercromby. So far as I know, the particulars of this affair have never before been given; even Stewart, in his chapter on Mutinies, omitting to notice that of the Grant Highlanders.

RESEARCHES IN THE EAST.

I AM a dweller among the denizens of the east end of London. I am not ashamed to say that I am better acquainted with that unpopular quarter of the metropolis than with the realms of fashion. To me, Mile End is more familiar than Mayfair; I know more of Bethnal Green than of Belgravia. I was born and bred among the vulgar thousands whose existence is ignored by the mighty west, and I have a fellow-feeling for them. It is true, a snug investment I have in the Three per Cents. would warrant me in taking a villa at Baywater, or a lodge at Hampstead; but I prefer breathing my native air, which circles round the pleasant places of Whitechapel—an atmosphere redolent, it is true, of smoke and dust, and effluvium from sugar-bakeries, and sources of a still more questionable character, but still my native air, and therefore deserving my respect. I have made a study of my neighbours; I enjoy an extensive acquaintance with weavers, costermongers, and nondescripts. Every nook and corner of the surrounding district is familiar to me; the most secret *adyta* of that region little known have not escaped my search. Do you wish to know where the pickpockets live, or to find the sleeping-places of the myriad oyster-stalls, or to visit the hidden manufactories of ginger-beer and sherbet, so extensively patronised in the east? I shall be happy, gentle reader, to be your guide.

Let us take a ramble through these narrow streets that fill up the space between Hackney Road and Whitechapel. Branching out into a devious net-work on every hand—house-rows crowded so close upon each other, that opposite neighbours of a friendly disposition may almost shake hands across the street. Plenty of room here for the sluggish smoke to hover; plenty of room for the steaming exhalations from the open channel on each side, where the fetid water lies with prismatic scum upon its surface; but small space for the fresh breeze which *ought* to sweep in, and lift the murky curtain. Ah! it is never so light here as it is everywhere else. In summer, the sun-rays fall with subdued effect; in winter, the fog is densest here, and the smoke least willing to quit possession. In the great cyclorama, this part is 'cast discreetly into shade.' Look at these rows of houses four stories high, with windows nearly as broad as the rooms inside. These are the dwellings of the Spitalfields weavers, about whom there has been so much talk. You do not know that from this unpromising region come forth many of those glossy silks and velvets, whose choice texture and pleasant sheen attract the shoppers in Regent Street, and adorn the patrician

damsels of the parks? If you listen, you will hear the dull clank of the looms, as the weavers work with hand and foot, and drive the shuttle for dear life. You would like to see the weaver at his work? I have a special friend in this house; let us go in. The dwelling is four stories high, two rooms on a floor; there is a family in each room, and the tenants are all weavers. My friend is busy at his loom; he tells me he has been 'at play' for several weeks, and now he has a large quantity of work to finish by Saturday morning. He must work day and night to get it done. He has a cheap newspaper before him, from which, when the silk is free from knots, and it is plain sailing, he reads a virulent attack upon a rotten ministry, or an eloquent analysis of the Treaty of Peace. My friend's name is Greenow (Grinnoneau); that of the man on the next floor is Lusany (Lusigné); that of the family at the back is Bonwell (Bonville). They are all, like a large proportion of these weavers, descendants of the French refugees who came over to England at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Their names, originally French, are clipped, and twisted, and mispronounced into an English form. My friend here can shew you his great-great-grandfather's Bible, with his name written in it by that worthy père who accompanied his flock in their flight to the land of liberty. There is his name, Jean François Grinnoneau, the date of his expatriation, and the names of his descendants, in lineal order, down to the present representative. This man cannot speak a word of French, is considerably John Bullish in his constitution, and claims the right of a native to grumble and abuse the powers that be. These weavers are the aristocracy of the neighbourhood, and, on the whole, they are a set of thinking men. They patronise cheap literary institutions, listen to lectures with decent composure, and are partakers in the benefits of certain ha'penny newspapers, where they can keep pace with the course of events in the *Sun* and *Globe*, and follow the mettlesome leaders in the *Times*.

Leaving this region of silk-weaving, let us approach a little nearer to the city. Here we find the houses still more crowded, the thoroughfares ill paved, and undrained courts, with a choice of smells that might almost rival the 'two-and-seventy stench' of Cologne. Here is a most unpossessing *cul-de-sac*: at least, it looks like that; but if you go to the bottom, you will find a narrow archway that a casual observer might well overlook, which conducts into a court beyond. The people of the place are observing us; furtive glances are cast at us from behind window-curtains and doors ajar. Strangers do not often penetrate here; the scripture-reader and the city-missionary are the only visitors—except the policeman—who are not free of the fraternity.

Put your handkerchief in your breast-pocket, and button up your coat over your watch-chain; we are in the region of the pickpockets and thieves. I met with an adventure in this court some time since, which served to teach me its character. I was passing Whitechapel church one night, when I heard a light step in retreat behind me. I instinctively clapped my hand to my pocket—my handkerchief was gone. Turning round hastily, I caught sight of a boy running across the road, and thrusting something into his jacket as he ran. I gave chase. The urchin entered one of the by-streets at an easy pace; but finding himself pursued, soon struck off into the labyrinth of courts. Like an old hand, he doubled upon me, in and out, up one alley and down another. But I knew the ground well, and kept close up; and so away we went at a slashing rate, clattering over the rough flags, dashing into the slimy gutters; cheered on by the passengers whom we passed, and knocking down a placid policeman in our flight. At last, I ran him down in this very court. The boy began to whine and beg pardon in a

much louder tone than was necessary; and having recovered my breath, I was just opening an oration on dishonesty, when whack! came my hat over my eyes, and a kick from an unknown source sent me prostrate on the ground. While thus prone and darkened, I heard the sound of a closing door; and on regaining my balance, my game had disappeared with my bandana, and the coast was clear. The young heathen frustrated my good intentions, for I meant to have sent him to some school or reformatory, whence he might in due time have come forth in the dignity of scarlet uniform, and have cleaned boots at a penny a pair. But it is growing dusk; and as my looks are too jovial for a city-missionary, and yours are too honest for a member of the free brotherhood, we had better wend our way elsewhere.

Here is a locality almost entirely inhabited by costermongers, an honourable guild. Yonder is a collection of the barrows, trucks, and other *impedimenta* of those who have sold out, or who are not on duty. The word costermonger, in the strict sense of the term, signifies a dealer in fruit; but it is applied also to the dealers in oysters, vegetables, garden-roots, &c. It was the observation of the illustrious Samuel Weller, that 'poverty and oysters seem to go together,' and here you cannot but be struck with the truth of the remark. Fruit-stalls are numerous, but oyster-stalls are far more so. At whatever hour of the day you may pass, you will see the lovers of that succulent luxury gratifying their taste. Either as an appetising preparation for breakfast, or a savoury substitute for supper, oysters seem to be infallible. In the western high places of affluence and pleasure, they never meet your view; but here, where squalid poverty and misery are so rife, they seem almost indigenous to the soil. Armed with the rusty pepper-box and the weakened vinegar, and with oysters opening before them, the inhabitants defy fate. There are no less than 80,000 costermongers in the east end of London. In these days of military spectacles, I should like to witness a review of the costermongers: 80,000 Tatars and Amazons, with their 80,000 barrows, would be a sight worth seeing. The discipline might not be very perfect, and the evolutions might not be very imposing; but give them the Russian administration of raki—or a substitute—and start them with the war-cries of Billingsgate and Covent Garden, and they would rival the charge at Balaklava.

You can gather but a faint idea of the denseness of the population from merely observing the number of the houses; you must take into the account the separate families, varying from four to sixteen, which each dwelling contains. Now, here is a street consisting of about thirty houses, and each house is tenanted, on an average, by sixteen families. If you would like to see how human beings can herd together, come with me into this house. Here is a room with a woman and five children in it; a rabbit-hutch in one corner, and a dog with a litter of puppies under the bed. The atmosphere is stifling. Ask the woman to set the window open; she replies that she did so one day last week, but that she will not do it again, for the children have had bad colds ever since. In the next room, a newly married couple are added to the tenant-family, in the capacity of lodgers; and thus there are two families, nine souls, with the usual addenda of birds, cats, &c., living and sleeping in one small room. In one apartment at the top dwells a maker of lucifer-matches, salamandering in fire and brimstone. The cellar is occupied by a compounder of villainous *eau sucrée*, which he dignifies by the title of ginger-beer. But here there is an unmistakable odour of something stronger and 'shorter' than that: a steamy vapour comes up in thin streams through the cracks in the boards, laden with the pungent smell of gin. 'Come, good woman, no use disguising it, there's a still at work in the cellar.' I have known half-a-

dozen illicit stills in one parish—known to, and extensively patronised by, the neighbours. The liquor is dispensed chiefly in ha'porths; and as customers get for their money about four times the quantity, and that of a far better quality than they would get at the 'palace' in the road, they are very ready to encourage private enterprise.

If you look at the map of London, you will observe that the district we have been traversing forms an irregular five-sided figure, bounded by the Hackney and Cambridge Roads, Bishopsgate Street, Houndsditch, and Whitechapel. As to area, this space is about one-thirtieth part of London; as to population, it is about one-eighth. Thus crowded together, epidemic diseases are always present with the inhabitants in some form or other. A fever acts here as a round-shot would do upon a close column of troops—a score are struck down, where only one would have fallen had the column been in open order. I saw this place in both the late visitations of cholera. Passing through a street during the first, I observed every house closed; I thought it a token of respect on occasion of the death or funeral of some person much esteemed; but, on inquiry, I found that every house had its own separate cause of mourning. During the height of the last attack, 600 interments a day was the average number for the seven or eight graveyards and cemeteries remaining unclosed in the neighbourhood. Many of these came from other parts, but still a frightful proportion from the district alluded to. Trooping on from early morning till late at night—hearse, and mute, and plume, in stately procession—coffins put through cab-windows, the relatives sitting face to face, with the corpse between them—or decently boxed under foot of the mourners in a patent vehicle, or humbly borne on men's shoulders to its last abode. For weeks together, during the daytime, I never looked from my window, I never stirred abroad in the street, without seeing one or more of these sad processions.

There is one redeeming feature amidst all this dirt, and smoke, and pestilential closeness—there is a park close by, with lakes, and pampered water-fowl, and trees of actual green, and its very grass enchanting to the half-stifed thousands who nightly flock to it for a breath of air. Were it not for this, the state of this part would be even more hideous than it is. This mitigates the evil; but how to remedy it is a question for the wise. When the value of health and life shall be reckoned above the value of property—when sanitary boards shall be more than a mere name—in that good time coming which requires such a telescopic faith to discern its approach; then may the east become habitable and healthy, and its people enjoy their due heritage of God's light and air.

THE WAR-TRAIL:

A ROMANCE.

CHAPTER V.—MY CAPTIVE.

'Do not kill me, sir! I am a woman!'

This declaration scarcely astonished me; I was half prepared for it. During our wild gallop, I had noticed one or two circumstances which led me to suspect that the spy I pursued was a female. As the mustang sprang over the zequia, the flowing skirt of the *manga* was puffed upward, and hung for some moments spread out in the air. A velvet bodice beneath, a tunic-like skirt, the *tournaise* of the form, all impressed me as singular for a cavallero, however rich and young. The limbs I could not see, as the goat-skin *arnas-de-agua* were drawn over them; but I caught a glimpse of a gold spur, and the heel of a tiny red boot to which it was attached. The clubbed hair, too, loosened by the violent motion, sprang backward, and in two thick plaits, slightly dishevelled, rested upon

the croup of the horse. A young Indian's might have done so, but his tresses would have been jet-black and coarse-grained, whereas those under my eyes were soft, silky, and nut-brown. Neither the style of riding—à la *Duchesse de Berri*—nor the manlike costume of manga and hat, hindered me from forming my conclusions. Both the style and costume are common to the *rancheras* of Mexico. Moreover, as the mustang made his last double, I had caught a near view of the side face of his rider. The features of no man—not the Trojan shepherd, not Adonis nor Endymion—were so exquisitely chiseled as they. Certainly a woman! Her declaration at once put an end to my conjectures, but, as I have said, did not astonish me.

I was astonished, however, by its tone and manner. Instead of being uttered in accents of alarm, it was pronounced as coolly as if the whole thing had been a jest! Sadness, not supplication, was the prevailing tone, which was further confirmed as she knelt to the ground, pressed her lips to the muzzle of the still breathing mustang, and exclaimed:

'Ay-de-mi! pobre yegua! muerta! muerta!' (Alas me! poor mare! dead! dead!)

'A woman?' said I, feigning astonishment. My interrogatory was unheeded; she did not even look up.

'Ay-de-mi! pobre yegua! Lola, Lolita!' she repeated, as coolly as if the dead mustang was the only object of her thoughts, and I, the armed assassin, fifty miles from the spot!

'You say you are a woman?' I again asked—in my embarrassment scarcely knowing what to say.

'Sí, señor; nada mas—que quiere V.?' (Yes, sir; nothing more—what do you want?) As she made this reply, she rose to her feet, and stood confronting me without the slightest semblance of fear. So unexpected was the answer, both in tone and sentiment, that for the life of me I could not help breaking into a laugh.

'You are merry, sir. You have made me sad; you have killed my favourite!'

I shall not easily forget the look that accompanied these words—sorrow, anger, contempt, defiance, were expressed in one and the same glance. My laughter was suddenly checked; I felt humiliated in that proud presence.

'Señorita,' I replied, 'I deeply regret the necessity I have been under: it might have been worse.'—

'And how, pray?—how worse?' demanded she, interrupting me.

'My pistol might have been aimed at yourself, but for a suspicion.'—

'Carrambo!' cried she, again interrupting me, 'it could not have been worse! I loved that creature dearly—dearly as I do my life—as I love my father—pobre yegua—yeguita—ita—ita!'

And as she thus wildly expressed herself, she bent down, passed her arms around the neck of the mustang, and once more pressed her lips to its velvet cheek. Then gently closing its eyelids, she rose to an erect attitude, and stood with folded arms, regarding the lifeless form with a sad and bitter expression of countenance.

I scarcely knew what to say. I was in a dilemma with my fair captive. I would have given a month of my 'pay-roll' to have restored the spotted mustang to life; but as that was out of the question, I bethought me of some means of making restitution to its owner. An offer of money would not be delicate. What then?

A thought occurred to me, that promised to relieve me from my embarrassment. The eagerness of the rich Mexicans to obtain our large American horses—*frisones*, as they term them—was well known throughout the army. Fabulous prices were often paid for them by these *ricos*, who wanted them for display upon the *Paseo*. We had many good half-bred bloods in the troop; one of these, thought I, might be acceptable, even to a lady who had lost her pet. I made the

offer as delicately as I could. It was rejected with scorn!

'What, señorita!' cried she, striking the ground with her foot till the rowels rang—'what? A horse to me?—Mira!' she continued, pointing to the plain: 'look there, sir! There are a thousand horses; they are mine. Now, know the value of your offer. Do I stand in need of a horse?'

'But, señorita,' stammered I apologetically, 'these are horses of native race. The one I propose to'—

'Bah!' she exclaimed, interrupting me, and pointing to the mustang; 'I would not have exchanged that native for all the frisones in your troop. Not one of them was its equal!'

A personal slight would not have called forth a contradiction; yet this defiance had that effect. She had touched the chord of my vanity—I might almost say, of my affection. With some pique I replied:

'One, señorita?'

I looked towards Moro as I spoke. Her eyes followed mine, and she stood for some moments gazing at him in silence. I watched the expression of her eye; I saw it kindle into admiration as it swept over the gracefully curving outlines of my noble steed. He looked at the moment superb; the short skurry had drawn the foam from his lips, and flakes of it clung against his neck and counter, contrasting finely with the shining black of his skin; his sides heaved and fell in regular undulations, and the smoke issued from his blood-red nostrils; his eye was still on fire, and his neck proudly arched, as though conscious of his late triumph, and the interest he was now exciting.

For a long while she stood gazing upon him, and though she spoke not a word, I saw that she recognised his fine points.

'You are right, caballero,' said she at length, thoughtfully; 'he is.'

Just then, a series of reflections were passing through my mind, that rendered me extremely uncomfortable; and I felt regret that I had so pointedly drawn her attention to the horse. Would she demand him? That was the thought that troubled me. I had not promised her any horse in my troop, and Moro I would not have given for her herd of a thousand; but on the strength of the offer I had made, what if she should fancy him? The circumstances were awkward for a refusal; indeed, under any circumstances refusal would have been painful. I began to feel that I could deny nothing. This proud, beautiful woman already divided my interest with Moro!

My position was a delicate one; fortunately, I was relieved from it by an incident that carried our thoughts into a new current: the troopers who had followed me at that moment rode up.

She seemed uneasy at their presence; that could not be wondered at, considering their wild garb and fierce looks. I ordered them back to their quarters. They stared for a moment at the fallen mustang with its rich blood-stained trappings, at its late rider, and her picturesque garments; and then, muttering a few words to one another, obeyed the order. I was once more alone with my captive.

CHAPTER VI.

ISOLINA DE VARGAS.

As soon as the men were out of hearing, she said interrogatively: 'Tejanos?'

'Some of them are Texans—not all.'

'You are their chief?'

'I am.'

'Captain, I presume?'

'That is my rank.'

'And now, Señor Captain, am I your captive?'

The question took me by surprise, and, for the moment, I did not know what answer to make. The excitement

of the chase, the encounter, and its curious developments—perhaps, above all other things, the bewitching beauty of my captive—had driven out of my mind the whole purpose of the pursuit; and for some minutes I had not been thinking of any result. The interrogatory reminded me that I had a delicate duty to perform. Was this lady a spy?

Such a supposition was by no means improbable, as any old campaigner can testify. 'Fair ladies—though never one so fair as she—have, ere now, served their country in this fashion. She may be the bearer of some important dispatch for the enemy. If so, and I permit her to go free, the consequences may be serious—unpleasant even to myself.' Thus ran my reflections.

On the other hand, I disliked the duty of taking her back a prisoner. I feared to execute it; I dreaded her displeasure. *I wished to be friends with her.* I felt the influence of that mysterious power which transcends all strength—the power of beauty. I had been but ten minutes in the company of this brown-skinned maiden, and already she controlled my heart as though she had been its mistress for life!

I knew not how to reply. She saw that I hesitated, and again put the question:

'Am I your captive?'

'I fear, señorita, I am yours.'

I was prompted to this declaration, partly to escape from a direct answer, and partly giving way to the passion already fast gathering in my bosom. It was no coquetry on my part, no desire to make a pretty passage of words. Though I spoke only from impulse, I was serious; and with no little anxiety did I watch the effect of my speech.

Her large lustrous eyes rested upon me, at first with a puzzled expression; this gradually changed to one of more significance—one that pleased me better. She seemed for a moment to throw aside her indifference, and regarded me with more attention. I fancied, from the glance she gave, that she was contented with what I had said. For all that, the slight curl upon her pretty lip had a provoking air of triumph in it; and she resumed her proud *hauteur* as she replied:

'Come, caballero; this is idle compliment. Am I free to go?'

I wavered betwixt duty and over-politeness: a compromise offered itself.

'Lady,' said I, approaching her, and looking as seriously as I could into her beautiful eyes, 'if you give me your word that you are *not* a spy, you are free to go: your word—I ask nothing more.'

I prescribed these conditions rather in a tone of entreaty than command. I affected sternness, but my countenance must have mocked me.

My captive broke into unrestrained laughter, crying out at intervals:

'I a spy!—a spy! Ha, ha, ha! Señor Capitan, you are jesting?'

'I hope, señorita, you are in earnest. You are no spy, then?—you bear no dispatch for our enemy?'

'Nothing of the sort, mio capitan;' and she continued her light laughter.

'Why, then, did you try to make away from us?'

'Ah, caballero! are you not Tejanos? Do not be offended when I tell you that your people bear but an indifferent reputation among us Mexicans.'

'But your attempt to escape was, to say the least, rash and imprudent: you risked life by it.'

'*Carambo*, yes! I perceive I did;' and she looked significantly at the mustang, while a bitter smile played upon her lips. 'I perceive it now; I did not then. I did not think there was a horseman in all your troop could come up with me. *Merced!* there was one. You have overtaken me: you alone could have done it.'

As she uttered these words, her large brown eyes were once more turned upon me—not in a fixed gaze,

but wandering. She scanned me from the forage-cap on my crown to the spur upon my heel. I watched her eye with eager interest: I fancied that its scornful expression was giving way; I fancied there was a ray of tenderness in the glance. I would have given the world to have divined her thoughts at that moment.

Our eyes met, and parted in mutual embarrassment—at least I fancied so; for on turning again, I saw that her head drooped, and her gaze was directed downward, as if some new thought occupied her.

For some moments, both were silent. We might have remained longer thus, but it occurred to me that I was acting rudely. The lady was still my captive. I had not yet given her permission to depart: I hastened to tender it.

'Spy or no spy, señorita, I shall not detain you. I shall bear the risk: you are free to go.'

'*Gracias! caballero!* And now, since you have behaved so handsomely, I shall set your mind at rest about the risk. Read!'

She handed me a folded paper; at a glance, I recognised the *safe-guard* of the commander-in-chief, enjoining upon all to respect its bearer—the *Doña Isolina de Vargas*.

'You perceive, mio capitan, I was not your captive after all? ha! ha! ha!'

'Lady, you are too generous not to pardon the rudeness to which you have been subjected?'

'Freely, capitan—freely.'

'I shudder at thought of the risk you have run. Why did you act with such imprudence? Your sudden flight at sight of our picket caused suspicion, and of course it was our duty to follow and capture you. With the *safe-guard*, you had no cause for flight.'

'Ha! it was that very *safe-guard* that caused me to fly.'

'The *safe-guard*, señorita? Pray, explain!'

'Can I trust your prudence, capitan?'

'I promise'—

'Know, then, that I was not certain you were *Americanos*; for aught I could see, you might have been a guerilla of my countrymen. How would it be if this paper, and sundry others I carry, were to fall into the hands of Canales? You perceive, capitan, we fear our *friends* more than our *enemies*.'

I now fully comprehended the motive of her wild flight.

'You speak Spanish too well, mio capitan,' continued she. 'Had you cried "*Halt!*" in your native tongue, I should at once have pulled up, and perhaps saved my pet. Ah, me!—*pobre yegua!*'

As she uttered the last exclamation, her feelings once more overcame her; and sinking down upon her knees, she passed her arms around the neck of the mustang, now stiff and cold. Her face was buried in the long thick mane, and I could perceive the tears sparkling like dew-drops over the tossed hair.

'*Pobre Lola,*' she continued, 'I have good cause to grieve; I had reason to love you well. More than once you saved me from the fierce Lipan and the brutal Comanche. What am I to do now? I dread the Indian foray; I shall tremble at every sign of the savage. I dare no more venture upon the prairie; I dare not go abroad; I must tamely stay at home. *Mia querida!* you were my wings: they are clipped—I fly no more.'

All this was uttered in a tone of extreme bitterness; and I, who so loved my brave steed, could appreciate her feelings. With the hope of imparting even a little consolation, I repeated my offer.

'Señorita, I said, "I have swift horses in my troop—some of noble race"—

'You have no horse in your troop I value.'

'You have not seen them all?'

'All—every one of them—to-day, as you fled out of the city.'

'Indeed?'

Indeed, yes, noble capitan. I saw you as you carried yourself so cavalierly at the head of your troop of *filibusteros*—ha, ha, ha!

'Señorita, I saw not you.'

'*Carrambo!* It was not for the want of using your eyes. There was not a *balcon* or *reja* into which you did not glance—not a smile in the whole street you did not seem anxious to reciprocate—ha, ha, ha! I fear, Señor Capitan, you are the Don Juan de Tenorio of the North.'

'Lady, it is not my character.'

'Nonsense! you are proud of it. I never saw man who was not. But come! a truce to badinage. About the horse—you have none in your troop I value, save one.'

I trembled as she spoke.

'It is *he*,' she continued, pointing to Moro.

I felt as if I should sink into the earth. My embarrassment prevented me for some time from replying. She noticed my hesitation, but remained silent, awaiting my answer.

'Señorita,' I stammered out at length, 'that steed is a great favourite—an old and tried friend. If you desire—to possess him, he is—he is at your service.'

In emphasizing the 'if,' I was appealing to her generosity. It was to no purpose.

'Thank you,' she replied coolly; 'he shall be well cared for. No doubt he will serve my purpose. *How is his mouth?*'

I was choking with vexation, and could not reply. I began to hate her.

'Let me try him,' continued she. 'Ah! you have a curb bit—that will do; but it is not equal to ours. I use a *mameluke*. Help me to that lazo.'

She pointed to a lazo of white horsehair, beautifully plaited, that was coiled upon the saddle of the mustang.

I unloosed the rope—mechanically I did—and in the same way adjusted it to the horn of my saddle. I noticed that the noose-ring was of silver! I shortened the leathers to the proper length.

'Now, capitan!' cried she, gathering the reins in her small gloved hand—'now I shall see how he performs.'

At the word, she bounded into the saddle, her small foot scarcely touching the stirrup. She had thrown off her *manga*, and her woman's form was now displayed in all its undulating outlines. The silken skirt draped down to her ankles, and underneath appeared the tiny red boot, the glancing spur, and the lace ruffle of her snow-white *calzoncillos*. A scarlet sash bound her waist, with its fringed ends drooping to the saddle; and the tight bodice, lashed with lace, displayed the full rounding of her bosom, as it rose and fell in quiet, regular breathing—for she seemed in no way excited or nervous. Her full round eye expressed only calmness and courage.

I stood transfixed with admiration. I thought of the Amazons: were they beautiful like her? With a troop of such warriors one might conquer a world!

A fierce-looking bull, moved by curiosity or otherwise, had separated from the herd, and was seen approaching the spot where we were. This was just what the fair rider wanted. At a touch of the spur, the horse sprang forward, and galloped directly for the bull. The latter, cowed at the sudden onset, turned and ran; but his swift pursuer soon came within lazo distance. The noose circled in the air, and, launched forward, was seen to settle around the horns of the animal. The horse was now wheeled round, and headed in an opposite direction. The rope tightened with a sudden pluck, and the bull was thrown with violence on the plain, where he lay stunned and apparently lifeless. Before he had time to recover himself, the rider turned her horse, trotted up to the prostrate animal, bent over in the saddle, unfastened the noose,

and, after coiling it upon her arm, came galloping back.

'Superb!—magnificent!' she exclaimed, leaping from the saddle and gazing at the steed. 'Beautiful!—most beautiful! Ah, Lola, poor Lola! I fear I shall soon forget thee!' The last words were addressed to the mustang. Then turning to me, she added: 'And this horse is mine?'

'Yes, lady, if you will it,' I replied somewhat cheerlessly, for I felt as if my best friend was about to be taken from me.

'But I do not will it,' said she with an air of determination; and then breaking into a laugh, she cried out: 'Ha! capitan, I know your thoughts. Think you I cannot appreciate the sacrifice you would make? Keep your favourite. Enough that one of us should suffer;' and she pointed to the mustang. 'Keep the brave black; you well know how to ride him. Were he mine, no mortal could influence me to part with him.'

'There is but one who could influence me.'

As I said this, I looked anxiously for the answer. It was not in words I expected it, but in the glance. Assuredly there was no frown; I even fancied I could detect a smile—a blending of triumph and satisfaction. It was short-lived, and my heart fell again under her light laugh.

'Ha-ha-ha! That one is of course your lady-love. Well, noble capitan, if you are true to her, as to your brave steed, she will have no cause to doubt your fealty. I must leave you. Adios!'

'Shall I not be permitted to accompany you to your home?'

'*Gracias!* no, señor. I am at home. *Mira!* my father's house!' She pointed to the hacienda. 'Here is one who will look to the remains of poor Lola;' and she signaled to a vaquero at that moment coming from the herd. 'Remember, capitan, you are an enemy; I must not accept your politeness; neither may I offer you hospitality. Ah! you know not us—you know not the tyrant Santa Anna. Perhaps even at this moment his spies are—' She glanced suspiciously around as she spoke. 'O Heavens!' she exclaimed with a start, as her eyes fell upon the form of a man advancing down the hill. '*Santissima Virgen!* it is Ijurra!'

'Ijurra?'

'Only my cousin; but'— She hesitated, and then suddenly changing to an expression of entreaty, she continued: 'O leave me, señor! *Por amor Dios!* leave me! Adieu, adieu!'

Though I longed to have a nearer view of 'Ijurra,' the hurried earnestness of her manner overcame me; and without making other reply than a simple 'Adios,' I vaulted into my saddle, and rode off.

On reaching the border of the woods, curiosity—a stronger feeling perhaps—mastered my politeness; and, under the pretence of adjusting my stirrup, I turned in the saddle, and glanced back. Ijurra had arrived upon the ground. I beheld a tall dark man, dressed in the usual costume of the *ricos* of Mexico: dark cloth polka-jacket, blue military trousers, with scarlet sash around his waist, and low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat upon his head. He appeared about thirty years of age, whiskered, moustached, and, after a fashion, handsome. It was not his age, nor his personal appearance, nor yet his costume that had my attention at the moment. I watched only his actions. He stood confronting his cousin, or rather he stood over her, for she appeared to cower before him in an attitude of fear! He held a paper in one hand, and I saw he was pointing to it as he spoke. There was a fierce, vulture-like expression upon his face; and even in the distance I could tell, from the tones of his voice, that he was talking angrily. Why should she fear him? Why submit to such rude rebuke? He must have a strange

power over that spirit who could force it thus tamely to listen to reproach?

These were my reflections. My impulse was to drive the spurs into the sides of my horse, and gallop back upon the ground. I might have done so had the scene lasted much longer; but I saw the lady suddenly leave the spot, and walk rapidly in the direction of the hacienda.

I wheeled round again, and plunging under the shadows of the forest, soon fell into a road leading to the rancheria. My thoughts full of the incident that had just passed, I rode unconsciously, leaving my horse to his own guidance. My reverie was interrupted by the challenge of one of my own sentries, which admonished me that I had arrived at the entrance of the village.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ORDER TO FORAGE.

My adventure did not end with the day; it was continued into the night, and repeated in my dreams. I rode the chase over again; I dashed through the maguays, I leaped the *zequia*, and galloped through the affrighted herd; I beheld the spotted mustang stretched lifeless upon the plain, its rider bending and weeping over it. That face of rare beauty, that form of exquisite proportion, that eye rotund and noble, that tongue so free, and heart so bold—all were again encountered in dreamland. A dark face was in the vision, and at intervals crossed the picture like a cloud. It was the face of Ijurra.

I think it was that awoke me, but the *reveille* of the bugle was in my ears as I leaped from my couch.

For some moments I was under the impression that the adventure had been a dream: an object that hung on the opposite wall came under my eyes, and recalled the reality—it was my saddle, over the holsters of which lay a coil of white horsehair rope, with a silver ring at the end. I remembered the lazo.

When fairly awake, I reviewed my yesterday's adventure from first to last. I tried to think calmly upon it; I tried to get it out of my thoughts, and return seriously to my duties. A vain attempt! The more I reflected upon the incident, the more I became conscious of the powerful interest its heroine had excited within me. Interest, indeed! Say rather *passion*—a passion that in one single hour had grown as large as my heart!

It was not the *first* love of my life. I was nigh thirty years of age. I had been enamoured before—more than once, it may be—and I understood what the feeling was. I needed no Cupid to tell me I was in love again—to the very ends of my fingers.

To paint the object of my passion is a task I shall not attempt. Beauty like hers must be left to the imagination. Think of the woman you *yourself* love or have loved; fancy her in her fairest moments, in bower or boudoir—perchance a blushing bride—and you may form some idea—No, no, no! you could never have looked upon woman so lovely as Isolina de Vargas.

Oh! that I could fix that fleeting phantom of beauty—that I could paint that likeness for the world to admire! It cannot be. The most puissant pen is powerless, the brightest colour too cold. Though deeply graven upon the tablets of my heart, I cannot multiply the impression.

It is idle to talk of wavy hair, profuse and glossed—of almond eyes with long dark fringes—of pearl-white teeth, and cheeks tinted with damascene. All these had she, but they are not peculiar characteristics. Other women are thus gifted. The traits of *her* beauty lay in the intellectual as much as the physical—in a happy combination of both. The soul, the spirit, had its share in producing this incomparable picture. It was to behold the play of those noble features, to

watch the changing cheek, the varying smile, the falling lash, the flashing eye, the glance now tender, now sublime—it was to look on all this, to be impressed with an idea of the divinest loveliness.

As I ate my frugal breakfast, such a vision was passing before me. I contemplated the future with pleasant hopes, but not without feelings of uneasiness. I had not forgotten the abrupt parting—no invitation to renew the acquaintance, no hope, no prospect that I should ever behold that beautiful woman again, unless blind chance should prove my friend.

I am not a fatalist, and I therefore resolved not to rely upon mere destiny, but, if possible, to help it a little in its evolution.

Before I had finished my coffee, a dozen schemes had passed through my mind, all tending towards one object—the renewal of my acquaintance with Isolina de Vargas. Unless favoured by some lucky accident, or, what was more desirable, *by the lady herself*, I knew we might never meet again. In such times, it was not likely she would be much 'out of doors'; and in a few days, hours perhaps, I might be ordered *en route* never more to return to that interesting outpost. As the district was, of course, under martial law, and I was *de facto* dictator, you will imagine that I might easily procure the right of entry anywhere. Not so. Whatever be the licence of the rude soldier as regards the common people of a conquered country, the position of the officer with its higher class is essentially different. If a gentleman, he naturally feels a delicacy in making any advances towards an acquaintance; and his honour restrains him from the freer forms of introduction. To take advantage of his position of power would be a positive meanness, of which a true gentleman cannot be guilty. Besides, there may be rancour on the part of the conquered—there usually is; but even when no such feeling exists, another barrier stands in the way of free association between the officer and 'society.' The latter feels that the position of affairs will not be permanent; the enemy will in time evacuate, and then the vengeance of mob-patriotism is to be dreaded. Never did the ricos of Mexico feel more secure than while under the protection of the American army. Many of them were disposed to be friendly, but the phantom of the future, with its mob *emeutes*, stared them in the face, and under this dread they were forced to adopt a hypocritical exclusiveness. Epaulettes must not be seen glancing through the windows of their drawing-rooms!

Under such circumstances, my situation was difficult enough. I might gaze upon the outside walls of that handsome hacienda till my heart ached, but how was I to effect an entrance?

To charge a fort, a battery, an entrenched camp—to storm a castle, or break a solid square—one or all would have been child's play compared with the difficulty of crossing that glacial line of etiquette that separated me from my beautiful enemy.

To effect this purpose, a dozen schemes were passed through my mind, and rejected, till my eyes at length rested upon the most interesting object in the apartment—the little white rope that hung upon my saddle-bow. In the lazo, I recognised my 'forlorn-hope.' That pretty implement must be returned to its owner. *I myself should take it home!* So far *destiny* should be guided by me; beyond, I should have to put my trust in destiny.

I think best under the influence of a cigar; and lighting one, I ascended to the azotea, to complete my little scheme.

I had scarcely made two turns of the roof, when a horseman galloped into the plaza. He was in dragoon uniform, and I saw he was an orderly from headquarters, and inquiring for the commander of the outpost. One of the men pointed to me; and the

orderly trotting forward, drew up in front of the alcalde's house, and announced to me that he was the bearer of a dispatch from the general-in-chief, at the same time shewing a folded paper. I directed him to pass it up on the point of his sabre, which he did; and then saluting me, he turned his horse and galloped back as he had come.

I opened the dispatch, and read:

'HEAD-QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION.
July—th, 1846.

SIR—You will take a sufficient number of your men, and proceed to the hacienda of Don Ramon de Vargas, in the neighbourhood of your station. You will there find 5000 head of beeves, which you will cause to be driven to the camp of the American army, and delivered to the commissary-general. You will find the necessary drivers upon the ground, and a portion of your troop will form the escort. The enclosed note will enable you to understand the nature of your duty.

CAPTAIN WARFIELD.

A. A. Adjutant-general.

'Surely,' thought I, as I finished reading—'surely there is a "Providence that shapes our ends." Just as I was cudgelling my brains for some scheme of introduction to Don Ramon de Vargas, here comes one ready fashioned to my hand.'

I thought no more about the lazo: the rope was no longer an object of prime interest. Trimmed and embellished with the graceful excuse of 'duty,' I should now ride boldly up to the hacienda, and enter its gates with the confident air of a welcome guest. Welcome indeed! A contract for 5000 beeves, and at war-prices! A good stroke of business on the part of the old Don. Of course, I shall see him—'embrace him'—hobnob with him over a glass of Canario or Xeres—get upon the most intimate terms, and so be 'asked back.' I am usually popular with old gentlemen, and I trusted to my bright star to place me *en rapport* with Don Ramon de Vargas. The coralling of the cattle would occupy some time—a brace of hours at the least. That would be outside work, and I could intrust it to my lieutenant or a sergeant. For myself, I was determined to stay by the walls. The Don must go out to look after his vaqueros. It would be rude to leave me alone. He would introduce me to his daughter—he could not do less: a customer on so large a scale! We should be left to ourselves, and then—Ha! Jjura! I had forgotten *him*. Would he be there?

The recollection of this man fell like a shadow over the bright fancies I had conjured up.

A dispatch from head-quarters calls for prompt attention, and my reflections were cut short by the necessity of carrying the order into execution. Without loss of time, I issued orders for about fifty of the rangers to 'boot and saddle.'

I was about to give more than ordinary attention to my toilet, when it occurred to me I might as well first read the 'note' referred to in the dispatch. I opened the paper; to my surprise, the document was in Spanish. This did not puzzle me, and I read:

'The 5000 beeves are ready for you, according to the contract, but I cannot take upon me to deliver them. They must be taken from me with a *show of force*; and even a little rudeness on the part of those you send would not be out of place. My vaqueros are at your service, but I must not command them. You may *press* them.

RAMON DE VARGAS.'

This note was addressed to the commissary-general of the American army. Its meaning, though to the uninitiated a little obscure, was to me as clear as noon-day; and although it gave me a high opinion of the administrative talents of Don Ramon de Vargas, it was by no means a welcome document. It rendered

null every act of the fine programme I had sketched out. By its directions, there was to be no 'embracing,' no hobnobbing over wine, no friendly chat with the Don, no *tête-à-tête* with his beautiful daughter—no; but, on the contrary, I was to ride up with a swagger, bang the doors, threaten the trembling porter, kick the peons, and demand from their master 5000 head of beef-cattle—all in true freebooting style!

A nice figure I shall cut, thought I, in the eyes of Isolina; but a little reflection convinced me that that intelligent creature would be in the secret. Yes, she will understand my motives. I can act with as much mildness as circumstances will permit. My Texan lieutenant will do the kicking of the peons, and that without much pressing. If she be not cloistered, I will have a glimpse at her; so here goes. 'To horse!'

The bugle gave the signal; fifty rangers—with Lieutenants Holingsworth and Wheatley—leaped into their saddles, and next moment were filing by twos from the piazza, myself at their head.

A twenty minutes' trot brought us to the front gate of the hacienda, where we halted. The great door, massive and jail-like, was closed, locked, and barred; the shutters of the windows as well. Not a soul was to be seen outside, not even the apparition of a frightened peon. I had given my Texan lieutenant his cue; he knew enough of Spanish for the purpose.

Flinging himself out of the saddle, he approached the gate, and commenced hammering upon it with the butt of his pistol.

'*Ambre la puerta!*' (Open the door!) cried he.

No answer.

'*La puerta—la puerta!*' he repeated in a louder tone. Still no answer.

'*Ambre la puerta!*' once more vociferated the lieutenant, at the same time thundering on the woodwork with his weapon.

When the noise ceased, a faint '*Quien es?*' (Who is it?) was heard from within.

'Yo!' bawled Wheatley, '*ambre! ambre!*'

'*Si, señor,*' answered the voice, in a somewhat tremulous key.

'*Anda! anda! Somos hombres de bien.*' (Quick then! We are honest men.)

A rattling of chains and shooting of bolts now commenced, and lasted for at least a couple of minutes, at the end of which time the great folding-doors opened inward, displaying to view the swarthy leather-clad *portero*, the brick-paved *saguan*, and a portion of the *patio*, or courtyard within.

As soon as the door was fairly open, Wheatley made a rush at the trembling porter, caught him by the jerkin, boxed both his ears, and then commanded him, in a loud voice, to summon the *dueño*! This conduct, somewhat unexpected on the part of the rangers, seemed to be just to their taste; and I could hear behind me the whole troop chuckling in half-suppressed laughter. *Guerilleros* as they were, they had never been allowed much licence in their dealings with the inhabitants—the non-combatants—of the country, and much less had they witnessed such conduct on the part of their officers. Indeed, it was cause of complaint in the ranks of the American army, and with many officers too, that even hostile Mexicans were treated with a lenient consideration denied to themselves. Wheatley's behaviour, therefore, touched a chord in the hearts of our following, that vibrated pleasantly enough; they began to believe that the campaign was about to become a little more jolly.

'*Señor,*' stammered the porter, 'the du—du—dueño has given or—orders—he wi—wi—will not s—see any one.'

'Will not!' echoed Wheatley; 'go, tell him he must!'

'Yes, *amigo*,' I said soothingly; for I began to fear the man would be too badly frightened to deliver his

message. 'Go, say to your master that an American officer has business with him, and must see him immediately.'

The man went off, after a little more persuasion from the free hand of Wheatley, of course leaving the gates open behind him.

We did not wait for his return. The patio looked inviting; and directing Holingsworth to remain outside with the men, and the Texan lieutenant to follow me, I headed my horse for the great archway, and rode in.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATUTE LAWS OF ENGLAND.

THE consolidation of the statute laws of England has been often attempted, but hitherto the scheme has always failed. Various causes led to this result: the members of the old commission spent their time in quarrelling; they tried to write each other down, and published all sorts of accusations and recriminations against each other; and until last session, every one thought the question was disposed of for many years.

Last session, however, the commission was reformed, and Sir Fitzroy Kelly, although an opponent of the present government, consented to waive political feeling, and undertook, unpaid and unrewarded, the laborious duty of heading it. For the time, toil and personal labour he will have to give to this duty, it may be doubted whether £7000 per annum would recompense him. Sir Fitzroy Kelly, however, has absolute authority to do the work in his own way, employing gentlemen at the bar of competent skill and experience to assist, and paying them for such assistance at his own discretion. It is also understood that the work, when done, is to be accepted as it is, and parliament is to be asked to take the consolidation bills in their integrity, and, in reliance upon the commission, to pass them without debate upon their provisions, in faith that they are not a new law, but merely the existing law, collected and arranged in an orderly manner.

In answer to the inquiries of the great law-reformer, Lord Brougham, as to 'the state and prospects of the consolidation of the statute law,' Sir Fitzroy Kelly, after mentioning his appointment, thus states the mode in which the work is to be done: 'To consolidate the statute law, is to take the statutes at large from Magna Charta to the last act of Victoria; to expunge and reject from the statute-book every act and every enactment which is either repealed, expired, or obsolete, and then to take what remains—which will consist of all that is law in force and to continue in force—to digest and to arrange this body of law by dividing it into classes, and subdividing each class into single subjects, and then to reduce the whole into single bills, each bill being on a single subject, but comprising the whole of that subject. The amendment of the statute-book is neither more nor less than the applying, by a series of new acts of parliament, a complete remedy to every grievance, every defect, and every evil which now exists in the statute law.'

The work was commenced in May last. Barristers were employed to go through the statutes at large, from Magna Charta to the 20th of Victoria; in short, to go through the entire statute-book, and having laid aside all the repealed and otherwise inoperative matter, to retain every act and enactment which is now in force, and intended to remain in force, and to digest and arrange this statute law in classes, and then subdivide each class into single bills upon single subjects; and, finally, to prepare, revise, and perfect the whole of these bills in one uniform style of phraseology, and upon one system of arrangement. Three classes were selected for a beginning: criminal law, real property law, and mercantile law. The criminal law was divided into eight bills. Barristers

were employed to prepare these eight bills, detailed instructions for their guidance being previously laid before them. As a draft of each bill was ready, it was first inspected and revised by Sir Fitzroy Kelly and Mr Greaves, a member of the commission; and all difficulties that presented themselves were noted down for ulterior consideration, and the bills were then gone through and finally corrected by Sir Fitzroy Kelly, Lord Wensleydale, Lord Chief-justice Jervis, and Mr Greaves, assisted by Mr Brickdale, the secretary to the commission. This class, containing the whole of the criminal statute law, thus perfected, was submitted by the Lord Chancellor to the House of Lords at the close of last session. The other two classes, real property law and mercantile law, and several single bills constituting classes by themselves, are now in preparation upon the same principle, and will undergo the same process of revision, and will probably be ready to be laid before parliament on the first day of the ensuing session. Simultaneously with the consolidation of the public general statutes, is proceeding that of the local, personal, and private acts. If government and the two houses of parliament give the support and co-operation which are necessary, it is supposed the entire work will be completed in three years from the commencement.

The difficulties attending this herculean task are well described by Sir Fitzroy Kelly; he says: 'It is almost impossible to exaggerate the difficulties which attend the undertaking. The question continually arises—whether the enactments of several reigns, as of William III., or of the Georges, are virtually or impliedly repealed or varied by other enactments upon the same subject, and with the same intent in later acts, as of William IV. and Victoria? So, likewise, provisions were found of the highest constitutional importance in statutes of Anne and William III., for supplying copies of the indictments and lists of witnesses to persons indicted for high treason. (It was upon one of these that the point arose in Frost's case by which his life was saved, and the fifteen judges divided against each other—eight to seven, and nine to six.) Then other provisions with the same intent, and nearly same effect, but varying from those of William III. and Anne when read together, were found in acts of George III. and IV., William IV., and Victoria.' These could not be repeated verbatim without contradiction; the strict legal construction of these complicated acts had therefore to be decided upon. This was done by Lord Wensleydale, Lord Chief-justice Jervis, Sir Fitzroy Kelly, and Mr Greaves; but not without many days, says Sir Fitzroy Kelly, of anxious and careful research and deliberation. Other serious difficulties arose from the vicious practice of repealing acts or enactments by provision that 'so much of any former act of parliament heretofore made as is inconsistent with, or repugnant to, the act in question, shall be, and is thereby repealed.' This evil makes it necessary to go through the whole of the earlier acts operated upon by the later act, and to determine how much is repealed and how much is not; and other difficulties of equal magnitude have already arisen, and must be anticipated throughout the entire work.

The evils resulting from the present state of the statute-book are manifold; any one purchasing the statutes at large must pay the price of, and encumber his shelves with forty volumes, of which above thirty-five are filled with inoperative and worthless matter! These forty volumes contain above a million of enactments, without order or connection. Enactments upon totally different subjects and branches of the law are thrown together. Any one wishing to ascertain the law upon a given subject, must go through the whole confused mass of matter, and extract, as best he can, what is law. And, from this confusion, the

acts themselves cannot be relied on in all cases as accurate. Thus, an act of Victoria cites in several places the 6th George IV., ch. 43, as the 5th George IV., ch. 43, which is an act upon a totally different subject; and misquotations, not only of the title, but of the language of former acts, are not wanting.

The present scheme of consolidation, involving as it does no alteration in the laws, is a grand one, and so far proves to be a successful one. But to insure complete success, it must have the full confidence of parliament. There must be no review by the legislature; it must be taken or rejected in its entirety; for if each bill is to be debated in all its details in committee of both Houses, a century would not suffice for the work.

The result of consolidation will be, that all the evils detailed will be remedied: 40,000 statutes—of which 16,000 are upon public general law—will be reduced to between 300 and 400. Forty volumes of statutes will be reduced to five or six volumes, indispensable to statesmen, lawyers, magistrates, and public officers.

The doubts as to what is, and what is not repealed, will be cleared up. The difficulties, and consequently the great amount of litigation to which the present uncertainty gives rise, are beyond calculation. It has been thought that more than half the business of all the courts of law and equity in the kingdom consists of disputed questions upon the construction of acts of parliament. Again, so long as the statute-book remains in its existing state, it will be impossible to adopt a pure principle of legislation. Mr Brickdale well observes upon this subject: 'A member of either House about to bring in a bill, finds that a class is suffering injustice or inconvenience, in consequence of the state of the law, which it is his duty to remedy; but he has not before him, in any simple or accessible form, either the whole law, or the subject, or any statement of the principle of the law, which is the cause of the evil complained of: he therefore naturally contents himself with introducing a bill which remedies that specific evil, and no more: he even carefully avoids any appearance of interfering with principles, for fear of effecting something which he did not intend, or unintentionally opening questions which would lead to opposition, and perhaps frustrate his whole immediate object—the removal of the evil actually felt.'

LITERATURE AND LITERARY MEN.

What is literature? Is a playbill literature, even when it contains laborious antiquarianism, deep geographical inquiries as to the outline of Bithynia and disquisitions on the Pyrrhic dance, or the length of petticoat of the Virgins of the Sun? Is a sermon published 'by request' of a decent congregation—which fell asleep before it could hear the end of it—literature? Is an indignant letter (paid for as an advertisement), wherein Brutus Junior threatens a village church-warden for refusing him a sitting in church, literature? Are the letters, marked respectively 1, 2, 3, and 4, up to the round dozen, in the hostile correspondence between Swifins, stock-broker, Fulham, and Snodge, drysalter, Muswell Hill, literature? Why did they quarrel about that Newfoundland dog, which came out all dripping from the Serpentine, and shook itself in the most snobbish manner over the apparel of a young lady, 'whose name it is needless to introduce in this very unpleasant affair' (but which we know to be Sophia Groby—old Groby's daughter, Fleet Street); and after a week's angry interchange of epistolary amenities, with fiery allusions to pistols for two (and no coffee), end by discovering that the sagacious Ponto meant no personal disrespect either to Swifins or the interesting young lady whose name, &c., and that even if he had, he was not the property, and therefore not under the control, of Snodge, of Muswell Hill. Is this literature? I suppose it is; for judging from my own experience, most writings of the present day are literature, and most of the people you meet are literary men.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

A DREAM.

I HAD a vision! O'er my life
It shed so bright a gleam,
So very sweet, so very soft,
Alas! how could I deem
To see it reft, while I am left
To know it was a dream.

'Twas like some bright bird fluttering
Through that dark grove, my heart,
Bearing the sunshine of its wing
Even to the gloomiest part;
Now cold and dead, its sweet life fled,
Leaving this heavy smart.

Like a calm star to my spirit's depth
That gentle vision shone;
'Tis faded, but a strange pale flame
Still burneth fiercely on,
Raising its light in wild despite,
The ghost of what is gone.

Or I bear my dream like a dear friend dead,
To a home in my secret soul;
I must be alone, oh, quite alone,
Ere I weep without control:
I could not hear the harsh ones jeer,
Still less the kind coudole.

In a very dark and silent room
It lieth concealed from all,
And I have covered its cold, stiff form
With a heavy funeral pall;
Yet I tremble and shrink as I sometimes think,
What, if the shroud should fall?

When the solemn hand has guided me
To the land I have in view,
And shewed me those I've sought in vain,
The loving and the true,
All grief that day shall have fled for aye,
Like the early morning-dew.

When I walk with a kindred soul at last
Beside heaven's crystal streams,
When truth shines down with unclouded light,
Instead of these fitful gleams,
Where the weary breast finds a lasting rest,
God grant there are no more dreams!

M. L. P.

NEW PROCESS OF VINIFICATION.

It has been discovered by analysis that the grape-substances giving out *colour, taste, bouquet, and flavour* to wine—namely, tartar, tannin, essential oil, and colouring matter—constitute only *one per cent.* of its composition, the remaining 99 per cent. consisting merely of sugar and water. It is this *one per cent.* alone which makes wine, distinguishes it from all other liquids, and bestows its different valuable qualities. It appears that the above-mentioned component parts, especially that which is most precious, the *essential oil*, are only one-fourth absorbed by the usual process of fermentation. There is therefore left undeveloped at the bottom of the fermenting tuns or vats 75 per cent. of flavour, &c., which, if saturated in a solution of refined sugar and water, will give out one-third of its unexhausted properties, which is sufficient to produce wine of a better quality than that derived from the natural must. This operation may be three times repeated with the same result; and even if tried a fourth time, will yield sufficient flavour to make a small description of vinous liquid. This discovery is due to the French chemists, who, on account of defective vintages, have deemed it worthy to investigate the subject.—*Ridley & Co's Monthly Circular.*

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